

# Engineering Case Study Red Dot Building Systems

File transfer problems.  
**Solved.**



## Fast and easy sharing of large project documents enhances communication and collaboration with customers and builds a competitive advantage.

### Background

Red Dot Building Systems has come to be an industry leader in the design, fabrication and erection of metal building systems. The company has an unwavering devotion to quality, innovation and customer service. For more than 40 years, Red Dot has symbolized "quality" when it comes to fabricated engineered structures and metal building systems.

Red Dot has earned this reputation by communicating and collaborating not only with internal architects, engineers and external experts in the design, manufacturing and construction processes, but especially with customers. Keeping everyone "in the loop" ensures that the final product yields a customized solution of superior quality and value that absolutely delights each customer in the end.

The engineering communication process necessitates sharing project documents including large architectural drawings, specifications, blue prints, photographs, scanned images and more. As the Red Dot employees and their external contacts began to share more and larger document files, the company had to find a convenient and secure way to transmit files electronically, especially to customers. Sending files via email was not doing the job.

### Challenges

"We administer our own email system, so we aren't limited by the size of sent or received emails," says Steve Pagitt, IS Manager at Red Dot Building Systems. "Since many of our customers go through AOL, Hotmail and other email systems they are still dealing with file size limits and quantity restrictions. As a result, we were having problems trying to exchange these large files with people outside our company."

Pagitt's team conducted a search on "email appliances" and looked at six possible solutions. After evaluating the options, Red Dot chose the Accellion Secure File Transfer System. "From past experience we knew we needed a solution that was pretty much 'hands off, set it and forget it,' and preferably appliance-based. That is usually the best way to go," says Pagitt.

Red Dot considered a hosted solution but worried about security issues. According to Pagitt, "We wondered, 'Is the data secure?' 'How trustworthy is the system itself?' 'Is it going to be available all the time?'" They also were uneasy about the billing aspect of the hosted solution. "It was at this point we knew we needed to have an in-house solution

**"When we called Accellion to inquire about their product, they satisfied all of our concerns and needs. We gave it a try and it has worked great ever since."**

Steve Pagitt  
IS Manager,  
Red Dot Building Systems

that we would own and could administer ourselves," says Pagitt. "That way, we would know it is always available."

### Solution

The Accellion solution offers the precise features and characteristics Red Dot was looking for in a file transfer solution. The main component is an appliance that requires little time for setup, administration or maintenance. The user interface is a familiar email-like interface that requires no training for end users.

Files can be sent ad hoc without any intervention from the IT department. The solution can be used by authorized external guest users including clients and consultants. Lifecycle file management is automated, so there is no need to manually remove files that have been on the server for a length of time (specified lengths of time can be configured by the administrator). The advanced security features also allow Pagitt to rest easy at night.

"The pre-engineered building business is very competitive," says Pagitt. "We don't want unauthorized people to have access to our drawings." With the Accellion solution, internal users can be authenticated using Microsoft Active Directory or another LDAP directory service. Outside guest users can be invited to set up their own account and use a customized secure web interface to send files to Red Dot employees. All files are encrypted when they are placed on the file transfer appliance, awaiting retrieval from the authorized recipient. Files can be scanned for viruses as they are uploaded or downloaded.

Pagitt says that most files sent through Red Dot's file transfer appliance are smaller than a gigabyte in size, but occasionally they can be up to four gigabytes. This is no problem as the Accellion solution can handle files and folders up to 20 gigabytes in size. Best of all, these files are offloaded from the email system, so there are no bandwidth constraints as large files traverse the network. Users access the files directly through any web interface.

Red Dot has rolled out the Accellion solution to move files externally as well as internally. Outside users visit a secure website and see a page with Red Dot's branding and logo, which appears as a custom application devoted to Red Dot customers and consultants. This branded site further enhances the communication and connection between Red Dot and its customers.

According to Pagitt, "We work with several consulting engineers. The project documents are uploaded to the appliance and downloaded by the engineer, and they send back the working documents the same way. All in all, it's a very efficient and worry-free process."

"We've gotten feedback from our customers who have used our file transfer system, and they think it is great," says Pagitt. "They tell us there's no way they could trade files with us just using their regular email systems. The Accellion solution is without a doubt a competitive advantage for us, as we are able to easily collaborate with our clients."

Red Dot is very pleased with the implementation of the Accellion Secure File Transfer System. "The nice thing about the Accellion solution is that it is a very powerful device," says Pagitt. "How you want to use it is pretty much up to your imagination."

## BENEFITS

- Secure two-way use of the system to send files to and receive files from customers and outside consultants.
- Reduced burden on email systems not designed to transport large files
- Easy to use to maintain and support
- Overall improved collaboration among employees, customers and consultants –a competitive advantage for Red Dot Building Systems
- Branded portal capability

## Specifications

Red Dot Building Systems	
Deployed since	March 2006
# of Appliances	1
Location of Appliances	Athens, TX
# of Internal and External Users	50 Internal 250 External
LDAP/AD directory integration	No
Web Interface	Yes
Virus Protection	No